

February 3, 2004

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Dr. Stein:

Enclosed you will find comments from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on the four preliminary draft Technical Memoranda provided by the Northwest Fisheries Science Center:

- Passage of Juvenile and Adult Salmonids Past Columbia and Snake River Dams
- Effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System on Salmon Populations
- The Role of the Estuary in the Recovery of Columbia Basin Salmon
- A Review of the Relative Fitness of Hatchery and Natural Salmon

We provide these preliminary comments in accordance with the request of Brian Brown at the NWF v. NMFS steering committee meeting on January 16, 2004. At that meeting, Mr. Brown explained that, even if the February 1 deadline for comments is extended—as it will have to be—to accommodate collaboration, it would be helpful for NOAA to receive preliminary comments from co-managers at this time. Because of the short time frame available to complete our reviews, and because these comments are without the benefit of a collaborative process, they may not be comprehensive or complete. We anticipate elaborating on our comments as part of, and following, the collaborative process involving the remand of the Biological Opinion.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. We look forward to working with you on subsequent drafts of the documents.

Sincerely,

(Signature on original, hardcopy to follow)

Ed Bowles
Fish Division Administrator

Enclosure

Cc: Dave Ward, Neal Coenen, file copy

DLW:dah